

**Chesterfield Police Department**  
**2730 Hicks Road**  
**674-7006**

**Crime Prevention Officers**

Bryan Miltenberger - Ext. 110

Mike Catron - Ext. 112

Mike Murphy - Ext. 113

**Auxiliary Police Officer**

Howard Barnes - Ext. 114

**Sergeant**

Dave Deringer - Ext. 108

**December 2004**

Providing a FIRST CHOICE community  
through excellence in public service



# CHESTERFIELD COUNTY NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH *Newsletter*



## Holiday Party Tips



There's a reason it's called throwing a party— a host has to be ready to catch some curve balls and juggle the unexpected when it comes to staging an event that's fun, entertaining and safe for everyone. Responsible hosts know that part of showing guests a great time is making sure they get home safely. Dealing with safe driving is an important hosting duty so we've compiled some quick tips to help you throw a memorably successful party without tossing caution to the wind.

### **Holiday Tips**

- Plan activities like party games, door prize drawings or amateur fortune-telling. Planned activities engage people, make for less active consumption of alcohol and ensure that your friends remember the great event long after the last piece of confetti has settled.
- As guests RSVP, confirm that at least one person in each group is prepared to be the non-drinking designated driver.
- Provide plenty of food to keep your guests from drinking on an empty stomach.
- Avoid too many salty snacks, which tend to make people thirsty and drink more.
- Offer non-alcoholic beverages or mock tails for designated drivers and others who prefer not to drink alcohol.
- If preparing an alcoholic punch, use a non-carbonated base, like fruit juice. Alcohol is absorbed into the blood stream faster with a carbonated base.
- Be prepared by having the number of a taxi service on hand for those who need a ride. Also, be ready with some clean linens so you can turn your sofa into a hotel for guests who need to sleep it off.



## **Holiday Party Tips cont.**



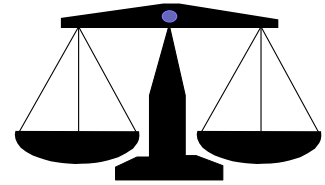
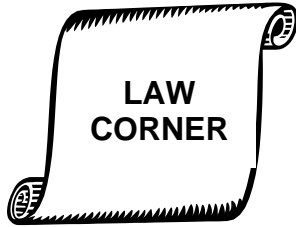
### **During Your Party**

- Never serve alcohol to someone under the legal drinking age, and never ask children to serve alcohol at parties.
- Don't let guests mix their own drinks. Choosing a reliable "bartender" will help you keep track of the size and number of drinks that guests consume.
- If a guest appears to be drinking a bit much, offer to freshen his or her drink with a virgin version.
- Don't rely on someone's physical appearance to determine if he or she has had too much to drink.
- Do not push drinks! Drinking at a party is not mandatory for having a good time.
- Beer and wine are just as intoxicating as hard liquor. A 12-ounce can of beer, a five-ounce glass of wine, a 12-ounce wine cooler and an ounce and a half of liquor contain the same amount of alcohol.
- Have fun – but not too much fun. To be a good host, you should stay within your limits in order to make sure your guests stay within theirs.
- Close the bar 90 minutes before the party ends and serve a great dessert treat with coffee.
- Don't rely on coffee to sober up your guests. Only time can make someone sober.
- If, despite your efforts, some of your guests have had too much to drink, drive them home, arrange for a ride with another guest who is sober, call a taxi, or invite them to stay over.

### **Drunk Driving Statistics**

- In 2002, 17,419 people were killed in alcohol-related traffic crashes – totaling 41 percent of all traffic deaths – another half a million are injured each year.
- During the holidays, the percentage of drunk-driving incidents typically increases. In 2001, 2,053 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day; 127 were killed during the Fourth of July holiday and 284 were killed during Memorial Day weekend.

Most of all have a safe and happy Holiday. If you have any further needs or questions please feel free to call the Chesterfield County Police Department Crime Prevention Section @ 674-7006.



# **Online Fraud**

Many financial institutions and companies that conduct business on the internet have become the target of fraudulent email and Web site scams. These scams are known as “phishes,” (pronounced “fishes”) and they attempt to illegally obtain personal and account information. Banking institutions will never send emails asking for personal or account information, passwords, Social Security Numbers, Pins credit or Check Card number or other confidential information.

## **How to identify Online Fraud**

It is often difficult to tell if an email is legitimate. Scammers have become increasingly sophisticated in creating fraudulent emails and Web sites that look authentic. These emails and Web sites often appear to be from legitimate companies and include images and logos of these organizations.

### **Following are some common characteristics of fraudulent emails and Website.**

1. They often have a sense of urgency telling clients that if they fail to update, verify or confirm their personal or account information, access to accounts will be suspended.
2. They typically ask for personal or account information such as:
  - Account numbers
  - Credit and check card numbers
  - Social Security Numbers
  - Internet Banking sign on IDs and passwords
  - Mother’s maiden name
  - Date of birth
  - Other sensitive information
3. They often include links that include a legitimate company’s name or Web address.
4. The fraudulent emails will disguise or forge the sender’s email address to appear to be from a legitimate company.
5. The emails and pop-up Web sites may include misspelled words and improper grammar.

### **How to Protect Yourself from Online Fraud.**

1. Never provide personal or financial information to unsolicited email, phone or pop-up Web sites requests.
2. Type Web addresses into browsers instead of clicking on links in email.
3. Change passwords and PINs every 30 to 60 days.
4. Keep anti-virus and anti-spam filtering software on your computers to date.
5. Monitor accounts and credit reports. The three major credit bureaus are:
  - Equifax 1-800-525-6285
  - Experian 1-888-397-3742
  - TransUnion 1-800-680-7289

If you feel like you have been a victim of online fraud please call the **Chesterfield County Police Department at 748-1251**. To request further information call our **Crime Prevention Section at 674-7006**.



## Chesterfield County/Colonial Heights

### Crime Solvers

The Chesterfield County/Colonial Heights Crime Solvers program needs your help solving several robberies that have been occurring in neighborhoods.

On Friday, Nov. 5, at 8:20 p.m., a residential robbery took place on Moorwood Ridge Drive in the Ridgefield subdivision. On Sunday, Nov. 7, at 2 a.m., another residential robbery took place on Upshur Drive in the Gatewood subdivision. In both of these robberies, victims had just pulled into their driveways when approached by two black males, one displaying an assault rifle, similar to a M16 or AK 47, and one displaying a sawed-off shotgun. The suspects took wallets, money, credit cards and cell phones, but refused car keys from the victims. A third subject drove the suspect vehicle, which is believed to be a small, dark Honda or Acura. Both robberies occurred on cul-de-sacs. For this reason, it is believed that the suspects may have been waiting in the area for potential victims.

Henrico County also experienced two similar robberies in early November. One of the robberies was on Pamela Drive and the other was on Banbridge Court. The robberies have occurred in neighborhoods where there is a minimal traffic flow.

The first suspect was described as a black male, 20-25 years old, 6 feet tall, weighing 230 pounds, with short hair, a goatee and dark clothing, and carrying an assault-type rifle. The second suspect was described as a black male, 20-25 years old, 5 feet 10 inches tall, weighing 160 pounds, wearing a red bandana and baseball cap, and carrying a sawed-off shotgun. There was no available description of the third suspect, who was driving the getaway car.

If you have any information about these robberies, or information about any unsolved crime in, or person wanted by, Chesterfield County or the city of Colonial Heights, please call Crime Solvers at (804) 748-0660. You do not have to identify yourself when you call, and if your tip helps to solve a crime, you could be eligible for a cash reward of up to \$1,000. Take the time, to solve the crime!

*Did you know that Chesterfield County/Colonial Heights Crime Solvers Inc. is a 501 (c) 3 organization that relies on donations to continue providing its anonymous tip-reporting program? No county or city tax dollars are used to fund the program. If you would like more information about Crime Solvers, please visit our Web site at [www.crimesolvers.net](http://www.crimesolvers.net), or call the business office at (804) 748-1278.*

**Comments** FROM YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH COORDINATOR

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